

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /010 W

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P 010310Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5759

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 2760

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

FOR EA HOLBROOKE ONLY FROM SHOESMITH

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAGR, JA

SUBJECT: GOJ HANDLING OF CITRUS FUNGICIDE ISSUE

1. NICK PLATT HAS CONVEYED TO ME YOUR PUZZLEMENT ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY WITHIN THE GOJ CONCERNING THE CITRUS FUNGICIDE ISSUE AND YOUR ANXIETY THAT THIS MATTER BE RESOLVED BEFORE PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. I REGRET THAT OUR REPORTING ON THE TWISTS AND TURNS OF THE GOJ'S EFFORTS TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THIS ISSUE FOLLOWING VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S VISIT MAY HAVE RESULTED IN A CONFUSING PICTURE, BUT LET ME TRY TO SUM UP WHERE I THINK WE NOW STAND AND HOW THE GOJ GOT THERE.

2. CERTAINLY WE ALL CAME AWAY FROM THE SECOND MONDALE/FUKUDA MEETING WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THE GOJ WAS PREPARED TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE FAVORABLY PRIOR TO FUKUDA'S WASHINGTON VISIT (MY NOTES TAKEN FROM THE INTERPRETATION ARE QUITE EXPLICIT ON THIS--I.E., A STATEMENT BY SONODA THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO PRESENT THE TEST DATA TO THE FOOD SANITATION INVESTIGATION  
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COUNCIL AND THAT "SOME RESULT" COULD BE EXPECTED WITHIN SIX WEEKS). WHEN I MET WITH YOSHINO FOLLOWING HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON IN EARLY FEBRUARY, HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT EVERYONE IN WASHINGTON WITH WHOM HE DISCUSSED THIS MATTER SHARED THE EXPECTATION OF AN EARLY RESOLUTION. HE EXPLAINED, HOWEVER, THAT THE INTERPRETER HAD MISSED A NUANCE IN

INTERPRETING SONODA'S REMARKS--I.E., SONODA HAD ACTUALLY SAID THAT ONCE THE DATA WAS SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL A RESULT COULD BE EXPECTED WITHIN SIX WEEKS; HE DID NOT SAY WHEN THE DATA WOULD BE PRESENTED. NONETHELESS, YOSHINO SAID THAT WHEN HE MET WITH THE PRIME MINISTER TO REPORT ON HIS TRIP, HE INTENDED TO INSIST THAT THIS ISSUE MUST BE RESOLVED PRIOR TO HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON. (I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER YOSHINO HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE THIS PITCH.) YOSHINO THEN RAILED AGAINST SONODA'S PLAYING DOMESTIC POLITICS WITH THIS ISSUE DESPITE THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THE U.S. OBVIOUSLY ATTACHES TO AN EARLY RESOLUTION. HE DEPICTED SONODA'S ROLE AS ENTIRELY CYNICAL AND EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT HE COULD BE TAKEN OUT OF THE PLAY. MEANWHILE THE NOISES WE WERE GETTING FROM THE AGRICULTURE AND HEALTH AND WELFARE MINISTRIES CLEARLY INDICATED THAT NO NEW INSTRUCTIONS HAD BEEN GIVEN FOLLOWING THE MONDALE/FUKUDA MEETING.

3. YOSHINO'S CONCERNS ABOUT SONODA'S ROLE EVIDENTLY WERE WELL PLACED. CAUGHT BETWEEN SONODA'S POLITICAL MANUEVERINGS AND EXPRESSIONS OF HIGH LEVEL U.S. CONCERN, A DECISION EVIDENTLY WAS REACHED TO SEND THE TEST DATA TO THE COUNCIL IN LATE MARCH FOLLOWING LOWER HOUSE DELIBERATIONS ON THE BUDGET WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT A FAVORABLE DECISION WILL BE GIVEN IN APPROXIMATELY SIX WEEKS THEREAFTER. IN THIS FASHION, SONODA EVIDENTLY GETS SOME POLITICAL CONFIDENTIAL

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ADVANTAGE OUT OF A FURTHER DELAY WHILE THE PRIME MINISTER WILL BE ABLE TO REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT THAT HE HAS THE MATTER ON THE TRACKS WITH A FAVORABLE RESOLUTION EXPECTED SOON THUS HOPING TO PREVENT THIS ISSUE FROM CLOUDING HIS VISIT.

4. INDEED, THE DECISION TO SEND THE TEST DATA TO THE COUNCIL AROUND MARCH 12 REPRESENTS SUBSTANTIAL "RESOLUTION" OF ISSUE SO FAR AS GOJ IS CONCERNED. I SEE PRACTICALLY NO CHANCE THAT WE COULD GET THE GOJ TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE ANY FURTHER BEFORE FUKUDA'S VISIT. I AM REASONABLY CONFIDENT THAT IT WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE GOOD ON ITS PROMISE TO HAVE A FAVORABLE FINAL RESOLUTION WITHIN A MONTH OR SO THEREAFTER. IF SO, WE WOULD HAVE IMPROVED THE SITUATION CONSIDERABLY SINCE PRIOR TO THE MONDALE VISIT THE EXPECTATION HERE WAS THAT THE GOVERNMENT PROBABLY WOULD NOT MOVE ON THIS MATTER UNTIL AFTER THE UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS.

5. URGE YOU ALSO INFORM DAVE HUME, FAS, OF ABOVE  
SO THAT WE ALL STAY IN STEP.  
SHOESMITH

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009